

Beginning life

Male and female tigers come together to mate. After mating, the male tiger leaves and the female is left on her own to give birth and raise her cubs.

A female tiger is **pregnant** for four months. She gives birth to between one and four cubs. Tiger cubs are born blind and are about the size of a house cat. They open their eyes after 10 to 14 days. The cubs feed on their mother's milk for the first six months.

The female tiger produces plenty of milk for her cubs. Milk contains all the nutrients that tiger cubs need to grow.



Cub teeth

Cubs are born with milk teeth.

Their adult teeth start to grow at about six months. The milk teeth are not pushed out in the same way as human milk teeth. Instead, the adult teeth grow beside the milk teeth and only when the cubs are well-grown do their milk teeth fall out. This means that young tigers never have gaps in their teeth, which might stop them from feeding properly.

Tiger

Often, one of the cubs dies shortly after birth. This is usually the smallest cub, called the runt.

fact

When the cubs have fed, the mother licks them clean.

